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inspections he made excursions into the interior of these islands, and, though not a scientific man himself, he wishes to help inquirers on scientific subjects. During one of these expeditions to the island of San Jose, he induced the natives to open a grave for him, of which there are a great number on a summit hidden by rank tropical vegetation; in the grave opened, they found the implements exhibited. He would have dug deeper in the grave, expecting to find beneath some other objects, when a lizard, bloated in form, and yet somewhat like a camelion, of which the natives are very much afraid, appearing in a tree overhead, they immediately desisted, and could not be induced to dig another foot of soil.

The whole surface of the island was covered with broken pottery, and showed that it must have been at one time densely populated. His idea was, that the islands were populated before the main land northwards had any inhabitants, and by a superior race, and he formed this conclusion from the more elegant forms and designs of the pottery he found scattered about.

No mention was made of the form of the graves, or of the materials used in their construction. A portion of a skull and several teeth in a portion of the ramus were also found, but crumbled away on being touched. These he did not disturb. He purposes to visit the same place and collect everything, without being satisfied with his own estimate of their value, in the hope that whatever he forwards to England may be set in order when delivered to the Society.

Some remarks on these implements were made by Mr. Carter Blake, Sir John Lubbock, and Col. Lane Fox.

The Honorary Secretaries read a series of reports on customs connected with child-bearing amongst the natives of Australia and New Zealand, communicated by Joseph Hooker, Esq., M.D., F.R.S., of which the following is an abstract:—

### 1. *Is Child-bearing Assisted or Solitary?*

Assisted, invariably; formerly by men, who had the name and credit of *tolungas*, or doctors, and who, squatting in front of the female about to be confined, pressed his knees against her chest, gradually extending the pressure downwards until the child was born. At present females assist principally, acting in much the same manner. Native women are seldom, and only from extreme weakness, confined while lying down. Confinements in the open air are preferred, but it is believed from a superstitious feeling.—W. H. SEARANKE.

On the approach of labour, the woman was placed in a house apart from the *kainga* (village), where she was watched until the first efforts to give birth, and then assistance was rendered by a person applying his or her knees to the stomach of the woman in labour, holding her

with his hands round the waist, the woman remaining in a sitting posture with the body erect.—R. PARRIS, New Plymouth.

According to Maori custom the pains of child-birth were invariably endured in solitude ; all assistance being declined, even to the severing of the umbilical cord and removal of the placenta. The position assumed during labour was always a kneeling one. Though, through intercourse with Europeans assistance is now sometimes brought in, the feeling is against it.—EDW. M. WILLIAMS, Waimate.

Child-bearing is solitary. The woman, feeling that her time is at hand, takes a mat, and goes into the bush by herself, but warns a female companion to be within hail in case of need.—R. MARSTON.

Child-bearing is assisted generally by the husband, or by a female relative.—H. B. WHITE, Mongonui.

It is always assisted.—\*

The native woman, often laboriously employed until the very moment she feels the pains of labour, retires, as a rule, unattended, and strives to give birth without assistance. If help be needed, it is generally given by near female relatives, or by the husband. The woman generally kneels down on a *tapan* (flax mat), with her knees about a foot apart, and, inclining her body forward, grasps any hard substance at hand, or, if attended, employs her companion's knees to press against the upper part of her abdomen.—\* \*

2. *Is the Umbilical Cord cut and tied as amongst Europeans ; and, if so, is it a Habit of Modern Introduction, and how was the severing of the Connection between Mother and Infant previously effected ?*

At present the umbilical cord is always cut, being previously tied with flax prepared for the purpose.—W. N. SEARANKE.

The umbilical cord was usually tied first with a string of *muka* (dressed flax), and then severed with a sharp edged stone, before they had knives, the cord being laid upon a piece of wood.—R. PARRIS, New Plymouth.

Tyeing and cutting the umbilical cord was always practised among the natives, and is not of modern introduction ; the instrument used being a sharp shell, previously selected and set apart for the purpose, and afterwards carefully preserved.—EDWARD M. WILLIAMS, Waimate.

The cord is cut and tied, but usually left about one foot in length. This is an old custom ; a *tuhua* (obsidian) was used to sever the cord, and is still preferred to a knife or scissors.—R. MARSTON.

The umbilical cord was cut with a *pipi* shell, but not tied ; of late years many use scissors, and tie like Europeans.—H. B. WHITE, Mongonui.

The umbilical cord is always cut and tied as among Europeans, and this practice is not of modern introduction.—\*

After delivery, many tie the funis once about three inches from the body of the infant with a string of *mata* (scraped flax), cut it close to the ligature with a kutai shell, and sprinkle or dust the end with finely powdered charcoal. Some make no ligature, but rub it with

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\* \* \* We have not received the names of these contributors.—SUB-EDITOR.

ashes and dust it with the charcoal ; and a few, I have heard, to use a sailor's phrase, take an overhand knot in the severed cord.—\* \*

### 3. *What is the Duration of Labour ?*

Not exceeding two hours generally, and birth easy. There are rare exceptional cases of difficult births, sometimes extending over two days.—W. N. SEARANKE.

The duration of labour varies from a few hours to five or even six days, as with Europeans.—R. PARRIS, New Plymouth.

Although some cases of lingering parturition are known to have occurred, as a rule the duration of labour is short, and the prostration of strength but trifling. Death during child-birth is of rare occurrence. Of two instances I can speak from personal knowledge. The first was that of a woman who, being taken in labour while at work in a field, retired to a short distance alone, gave birth to the child, and in two hours afterwards was again at work. In the other case, while on a journey, coming up to several natives sitting by the road side, I was surprised to learn that they were waiting for a woman of their party who, at a little distance from them, had shortly before given birth to a child, and was then recruiting her strength preparatory to continuing the journey. I remained with them about an hour, and as I left saw this woman proceed on foot with the rest of the party, carrying the newly-born infant herself.—EDW. M. WILLIAMS, Waimate.

The labour is usually quick, anything above six hours from the first pain would be considered long. In protracted labour two women, if procurable, assist ; the three lie down, the woman in labour in the middle ; the one behind places her knee against the small of the back ; the one lying in front waits the arrival of a pain, and then pushes with her knee against the stomach of the patient.—R. MARSTON.

From one to two days.—H. B. WHITE, Mongonui.

The duration of labour is generally short, from half an hour to three hours. There have been instances of protracted labour, but they are the exceptions to the rule.—\*

The time generally occupied from the beginning of pains to delivery of the child and expulsion of placenta varies from one to four hours, cases of twelve hours' duration being, I may say, exceedingly rare.—\* \*

### 4. *Are there any Peculiarities in the Treatment of Newly-born Infants ?*

No. The child is now usually washed with warm water immediately after birth, which was not always the case formerly.—W. N. SEARANKE.

The newly-born infant was washed with water, and the gummy substance in flax (*rito*), after which it was folded in the leaves of the Patete, Raurekan, or Mouku, in sufficient quantity to produce respiration, which when the leaves had absorbed, and the skin had become dry, the child was taken out of the leaves.—R. PARRIS, New Plymouth.

I am not aware of any peculiarities in the treatment of infants beyond an occasional flattening of the nose, exercising and stretching the fingers, toes, and limbs, repeating at the same time some mummeries said to be a prayer to the *Alua* (God) that the infant may grow up strong and handsome.—EDW. M. WILLIAMS, Wainate.

Infants are merely wiped, not washed, until the navel string drops off. When this has occurred, a week after birth, the child is taken to a priest (*tohunga*), who waves a portion of cooked food round the infant's head; the food is then buried. In this district the first food supplied to the mother is the water in which *pipis* have been cooked; in default of this article, boiled sowthistle is used as a substitute. Warm, both for fomentation and used internally, it is had recourse to when the after-birth does not come away naturally.—R. MARSTON.

The child is simply washed and placed with the mother as soon as possible.—H. B. WHITE, Mongonui.

No.—\*

Preternatural labours are rare occurrences; four which I have heard of being fatal to the mothers; and, as you are well acquainted with the offspring of these unfortunate women, it may not be out of place to mention that one is the strong and healthy young half-cast, William Stannanay, reared on goat's milk, while the other equally robust is Paora ta Nyonga's youngest son, fed in infancy upon mashed kinera. I find that in cases of this kind the fathers have invariably striven to save the child regardless of the wife. This, however, I can fully believe from examination of the crania, philoprogenitiveness being very largely developed. Abortions are not uncommon. I know a woman in Hokianga, young and apparently healthy, who had ten in the course of eight years. The cessation of the catamenia about the age of forty, though sometimes earlier.—\* \*

5. *Can any Traces be derived from the Legends or Superstitions of the Natives as to Rites, Observations, or Ceremonies Connected with Child-bearing.*

In former times, women of rank, or women living with men of rank, were in particular instances not allowed to sleep with their husbands for one month after the birth, and frequently for two months previous, during which time they were carefully separated from other natives. Living in a sacred house, and not allowed to cook or even touch food with their hands, they were in charge of one or more *tolungas*, who constantly prayed over them. For a month or two afterwards the mother and child were kept isolated, and fed by a *tolunga*. The ceremonies were carried out to a much greater extent when the child was a boy.—W. N. SEARANKE.

The superstitions connected with child-bearing are numerous. When a woman had prolonged labour she was believed to have been guilty of some offence, such as having cursed her *ariki* (the head of her family), or having disregarded a *Tapu*, or having been guilty of adultery. She would be interrogated as to her guilt, and if she confessed to one of them, which was usually the case, they would go and

gather herbs from the sacred grounds of her forefathers, and after roasting them on a fire, they would put them on the woman's head, and their *tohunga* (seer) would perform incantations during the time of labour.—R. PARRIS, New Plymouth.

In accordance with Maori superstition in connexion with child-bearing, the placenta on being removed was buried, and a tree planted over the spot. If the infant was a boy, and likely to become a person of note, this spot would in due time be pointed out to him, and ever afterwards be remembered, to be referred to or not as occasion might require. Instances have been known of territorial right being claimed in consequence of the placenta and umbilical cord having been buried in the vicinity, the tree being pointed to as evidence.

After the birth of a child, the mother was considered *tapu* (sacred) until the cord detached itself from the infant, when the ceremony of baptism took place. The infant, on being presented to the *tohunga* (the priest), was by him sprinkled with water and dedicated to *whiro* (the devil), who was invoked to instil bravery into its heart, with anger, passion, and every evil propensity of human nature. The cord which had been removed from the infant was then deposited in the shell with which it had been cut, and taken to a stream and placed upon the water. If the shell floated with its freight, the child was destined to enjoy a long and prosperous life, but if on the contrary it sank, a premature death, or at least some dire calamity, was predicted and looked forward to.—EDWARD M. WILLIAMS, Waimate.

When the umbilical cord heals, about the eighth or ninth day, the relatives assemble. The father is not admitted to this assembly, which takes place in the *karaha*. The child is held by the mother over a karamu bush, and she prays to the *litua* that her child may be a strong and gallant man, or a fair and industrious woman, as the case may be. The head chief is then requested to name the child, and preparations on a large scale are made for a feast. At the time appointed, the chief of the greatest rank takes the child in his arms, and after swallowing twice of the food presented to him, names the child. The other chiefs according to rank do the same.—H. B. WHITE. Mongonui.

The only ceremony, if it can be so called, connected with child-bearing, is the burial of a portion of the umbilical cord at the foot of some stone or post, to show the claim of the child to certain land.—\*

The newly-born infant in the cold season is very often at once wrapped up in its mother's garments, there to remain for weeks without any ablution, perhaps also doomed to pass the greater part of the winter in a filthy crowded place (?) closed up to all access of free air. Here in a horribly choky and miserable hut have I often seen all the occupants partake of those fetid dishes Kaanga, Kopiro, and Katero, while the mother from her damp steaming clothes would unfold, and assist to the same foul mess her little infant. The summer-born child, on the other hand, is in most instances immediately immersed in a stream of cold water, and its mouth and nostrils cleansed of any adhering mucus, the mother afterwards rubbing it briskly with the

palms of her hands along the back and limbs to restore warmth. This early baptism is called *toto*. A roll of *muka* is now tied pretty tightly to the infant's knees, as the natives say, to give the child straight limbs, and its arms and limbs daily stroked down with some degree of pressure, and its hands and fingers bent backwards. The nose also undergoes this same stroking process, a *simæ nara puella* being the one which in Maori estimation was in possession of a feature indispensable to the perfection of female beauty. I say *was*, because this peculiar taste seems to have undergone modification in the present generation. The woman at times, however, without regard to season, especially when the labour is attended with hæmorrhage, after the expulsion of the placenta, plunges herself and child into cold water, to promote the contraction of the womb, and perform the above-mentioned *toto*. In cases of asphyxia, vitality is occasionally established by mother and child before separation being both literally steamed over a *hangi* (native oven.) The child is weaned when about two years old, sometimes later, though long before this it has been gradually accustomed to the change of food. In regard to ceremonies now long laid aside and nearly forgotten, the above-mentioned *toto* may be called a first (?) baptism, the mother while rubbing the child merely muttering any wish (in regard to the child) foremost in her mind. Next came the *iriiri* or *puipui* (burial of the separated cord). The time when the slough of the funis separates from the infant's body (generally three days after birth) used to be considered of great importance, as being the ultimate affair in connection with the birth, the child being now first considered a distinct being. The mother used to take the separated part to the foot of some out-of-the-way tree—generally a young *ti* (cabbage tree), or a flax bush, and after having buried it there, would exclaim in a loud and distinct voice, such exhortation as, "*Mahi kai mau tomyaengal*," "*Whatu kakahu mau tomyaengal*," or, if a boy, "*Mau patu mau tomyaengal*," or "*Whakatuhuia, koe tomyaengal*," or "*Karo patu ki tae notu*." If these exhortations were not clearly and distinctly pronounced, the child might become indolent, or useless through sickness or otherwise. If the separated part were lost, it was an ill omen of the worst kind, the child would not be expected to live long. If the tree or bush at the roots of which the slough was buried showed signs of decay or died, the results would be similar to the child. Before the *iriiri*, the child had, as a rule, been named by either of the parents, or perhaps by some mere relatives. The mere giving it a name (*hua*), was, however, invariably done, I believe, without any prescribed form of ceremony. At the *iriinga*, a feast was usually prepared, rather remarkable for the nice distinctions observed relative to the different *kangis* (ovens), generally three or sometimes five in number. The food of the first was only partaken of by near relatives of the wife, the second was allotted to the members of the husband's family, the third again was given to relatives more remote, and so on, strangers only participating of the contents of the last. The child, if a girl, had now passed the ordeal of ceremonies; not so the boy. There was an anabaptism, or rebaptization,

called *tohi*, to take place about, or perhaps before, the age of puberty. At this performance, a *tohunga* officiates; he takes the boy away to some secluded *tapu* spring, and after having dipped a small branch in the spring, sprinkles him about the head and shoulders, invoking his (the *tohunga*'s) tutelary spirit, or devil if you will, to inspire the lad with health, strength, and respect (*mana*) necessary for martial toils and command, or ambitious ardour to revenge his slain relatives. The water itself was often also believed to have properties nearly analogous to the waters of the Styx, besides being a preservative against witchcraft, etc. A *tohi'd* boy seldom or never worked or carried (*pikau*) anything on his back, and had a prodigious number of privileges. There is a song relative to the wonderful effects of the *tohi* upon a certain *Manaia*, which commences,

Ko *Manaia* ko te *tama i tohia*  
 Ki te *tohi raukino*.—\* \*

*Extract from W. Colenso's work "On the Maori Races of New Zealand."*

At the birth of a child, especially of the first-born, of a couple of high rank, there was quite as much rejoicing as in more civilised countries. The maternal aunt or maternal grandmother of the infant was generally present, and ruled on such occasions; if not, then the paternal grandmother took her place. Sometimes the birth of a daughter was preferred to that of a son for political reasons. Of course, the spot where the child was born (if in fine weather in the open air) everything touched or used, and all who had anything to do at the birth, were strictly tabooed (*tapu*), under customary restraint, or "legally unclean," to sit apart for the time from every ordinary matter. The umbilical cord was tied with scraped flax, which sometimes slipping caused a protuberant navel, and not unfrequently hernia, which latter, however, disappeared at adult age. The natives have been charged with compressing the infant's nose, to flatten it; and while this has been commonly denied, it is evident that the nose salutations (*hongi*, nose-rubbing) it was continually receiving from its mother and relatives, must have had a great tendency that way; besides flat noses were always admired. Soon after its birth they commenced rubbing down its knee-joints, in order to reduce the inner part of the joint, and so make them "handsome." For this purpose the infant was placed face downwards by its grandmother, or by one of the elder women, on her closed legs, and its little legs and knees rubbed downwards with pretty much squeezing of the inner knee; this operation was daily, or oftener, performed during several weeks. Female infants had the first joint of their thumb half disjoined, or bent considerably outwards, to enable the women the better to hold, scrape, weave, and plait flax. At an early period the little ears of the infant were bored with a sharp fragment of stone, or bit of obsidian; an operation generally performed by its mother.

*With Regard to Aboriginal Women and their Parturition.*

When a woman finds herself upon the point of becoming a mother, she generally (accompanied by a friend) withdraws from the encamp-



ment to some quiet sequestered spot. When she brings forth her young, the umbilical cord is severed at once, and the end secured by a ligature; the child is usually rubbed dry (not washed) with some old piece of opossum rug, or blanket; by the time that operation is completed the mother has become strong enough to get up, when she walks back to the camp with her squalling progeny quite unconcerned as though nothing singular had occurred. As far as my knowledge goes, both by observation and hearsay, twin children have only been born once, and they were by an European father; the mother died, however, and both the children also. This is the only instance I ever knew or heard of wherein an aboriginal woman had the slightest difficulty in child-bearing: this woman, I may add, was of much less stature (though perfectly symmetrical) than any fully-developed female I ever saw. These remarks, of course, merely apply to the aborigines inhabiting the Valley of the Lower Murray; I have not had opportunities of studying closely the habits and customs of those dwelling in other portions of the colony.

A discussion followed, in which the President, Mr. Hyde Clarke, Mr. Dunkin, Dr. Camps, and Mr. Black took part.

Mr. Acheson then made the following remarks upon some remarkable stones resembling a cromlech in Australia:—

X.—On a Pseudo Cromlech on Mount Alexander, Australia. By MR. ACHESON.

NEAR the summit of Mount Alexander, about seventy miles in a north-easterly direction from Melbourne, Victoria, there are some groups of granite boulders presenting fantastic positions, the most remarkable of which is represented by a drawing I have deposited in the Society's collection. This group consists of one immense covering stone of about twenty-five tons weight, resting upon a number of smaller boulders, and forming a cavity or chamber within; the whole presents an exact representation of a cromlech of great dimensions, the supporting stones being partly rounded and partly split.

Mount Alexander is the highest point of the associated ranges, and is of granitic formation.

Dr. A. Campbell made a statement to the Society relating to some remains of boulders, etc., upon Marldon Island in the Pacific, at present uninhabited, and which he said was about to be visited by Mr. Bowen, a guano merchant, and he asked for suggestions for Mr. Bowen from the Society.

Some remarks on this subject were made by the President.

The Hon. Secretary then read the following paper by Mr. Layland:—